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研究課題名	Endangered Languages and Cultural Heritage: A Study of Language Revitalization Among Okinawan Communities in Hawaii				
研究成果の概要	研究目的、研究計画、研究方法、研究経過、研究成果等について記述すること。必要に応じて用紙を追加してもよい。(先行する研究を引用する場合は、「阪大生のためのアカデミックライティング入門」に従い、盗作剽窃にならないように引用部分を明示し文末に参考文献リストをつけること。)				
<p>1. Introduction: Ryūkyū History and Contemporary Diasporic Communities in Hawaii</p> <p>The Japanese prefecture of Okinawa was once the Ryūkyū Kingdom with its own distinct culture and language since the 13th century. However, it was invaded by Japan in 1609 and then annexed in 1879, and since then Okinawans have faced pressures from mainland Japan to assimilate (Nakasato, 2018; Uenten, 2007). One of the clearest examples of this was the extensive language planning that occurred at the start of the Meiji restoration. Following institutional reform,¹ discriminatory practices,² and significant pressure from both Japanese and Americans during WW2, the language has been severely repressed. Today's fluent speakers of Okinawan vernacular languages exist mainly among the elderly population, and because they are no longer being passed down to children, these languages of Okinawa are now classified by UNESCO as endangered and face complete extinction if significant revitalization efforts are not taken (Ishihara, 2007; Nakasato, 2018).</p> <p>The situation is complicated even more within the overseas diaspora communities where its members face discrimination and assimilation pressures by not only fellow Japanese immigrants (who often arrived before the Okinawans) but also by the society of the host country. Most fluent speakers of the Okinawan languages exist only among the 1st and 2nd immigrant generations (few of whom are still alive today) while the 3rd generation and beyond have been rendered monolingual speakers of the host country's language (Nakasato, 2018; Ishihara, 2007)). According to the University of Hawaii, Manoa's Center for Okinawan Studies, there are an estimated 45-50,000 Okinawans in Hawaii, most of whom are almost exclusively monolingual English speakers or English-Japanese bilinguals (Nakasato, 2018; n.a., 2010).</p> <p>Heinrich (2013, p.ix) states that "there is nothing to be gained from language loss for communities speaking an endangered language," citing several ways speakers profit from speaking their native language such as cultural maintenance, preservation of local knowledge, and indigenous empowerment. A more simplified argument is that language is the heart of culture. Thus, when a language dies, so does the essence of the culture of the community that once spoke it.</p> <p>But it is worth questioning what this way of thinking implies for those communities whose languages are</p>					

¹ A significant area of institutional reform was the purposeful spread of standard Japanese through the education system (Nakasato, 2018).

² Students caught speaking Okinawan in school were forced to wear the dialect tag (方言札) until they caught another student and were able to pass it on. A common tactic for getting rid of the dialect tag involved hitting another student to get them to cry out in Okinawan (Osumi, 2001).

already extinct. Following the logic of Heinrich and other scholars with similar opinions, are these communities then thought to no longer possess an authentic culture (Schwartz, 2018)?

This study seeks to understand the relationship between language and culture among communities whose language has already been lost. Instead of reiterating the tragic or shameful history the majority of English literature on Okinawan culture and language tends to focus on,³ this study aims at celebrating contemporary Okinawan culture, even if it is defined in the absence of language. Considering this, the following question will be pursued: in the absence of the original language, how is this culture defined and practiced by its community members?

2. Research Design

This study utilizes an ethnographic approach. During the week long fieldwork conducted in Hawaii, the focus has been placed mainly on participant observations in order to gain an in depth understanding of the social behavior within the context that it occurs. This took place primarily at the 37th annual Okinawan festival held in Hawaii both as a festival attendee and volunteer. Furthermore, the researcher has conducted several interviews (a combination of face-to-face and telephone) of participants from the Okinawan community in Hawaii.

Fieldwork Activity	Sample	Objective
37th Okinawan Festival - Observation (festival attendee) Participant observation (festival volunteer)	8 hours	To gain an immersive experience of how Okinawan culture is celebrated in the communities of Hawaii.
Qualitative Interviews	n=9	To gain an in-depth understanding of individual narratives and perspectives relating to Okinawan language and culture.

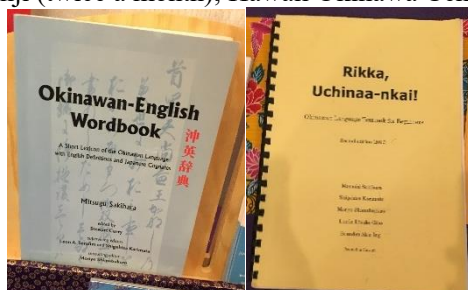
Table 1. Research Design

3. Findings

37th Okinawan Festival

The Okinawan festival is held annually on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. The year 2019 marked its 37th celebration. At the festival, there was a wide array of cultural exhibits and performances relating to both historical and modern aspects of Okinawan life.

One area in particular exhibited various information and displays related to the languages of Okinawa and language revitalization efforts. Among information related to the diversity and history of the Okinawan languages⁴, most relevant to this research project were the pedagogical resources available including the two instructional booklets photographed below. Furthermore, the following Okinawan language classes held in Oahu, Hawaii, were advertised on a small slip of paper at the back of the brochure for the *Rikka, Uchinaa-nkai!* workbook: Jikoen Hongwanji (twice a month); Hawaii Okinawa Center (twice a month).



Recent literature aimed at creating a formal pedagogical instruction of the Okinawan languages (Source:

³ Battle of Okinawa, American military bases, ethnic discrimination, etc.

⁴ All information available in these regards were also found online during the prior literature review of this project, suggesting a shallow amount of research available in the English speaking community.

taken by author, 31 August 2019).

In general, however, the main focus of the festival were the cultural performances (bon-dance, sanshin music, shisa-dog show, etc) and food booths. Educational exhibits such as topics relating to language revitalization and Okinawan history were much smaller and were located on a separate floor of the convention center the festival was held in. The researcher also partook in participant observation as a volunteer at the festival. Aside from those working at the administration level of the Hawaii United Okinawan Association, the Okinawan festival is run solely based on the work of volunteers who are allowed to sign up freely either online or even directly when they arrive. Without this kind of participation from the local community, it seems unlikely that the festival could take place.

Interviews

Given the time allowed, interview data was collected from nine participants.⁵ Contents of these interviews are summarized and analyzed in the following five figures. Figure 1 is a modification of a previous framework used by Nakasato (2019) in order to describe the processes of cultural and linguistic change when migrants come in contact with the host society. This framework is meant to act as a general *spectrum* to describe such changes. Definition of each term in relation to either a linguistic or cultural context is given in each box.

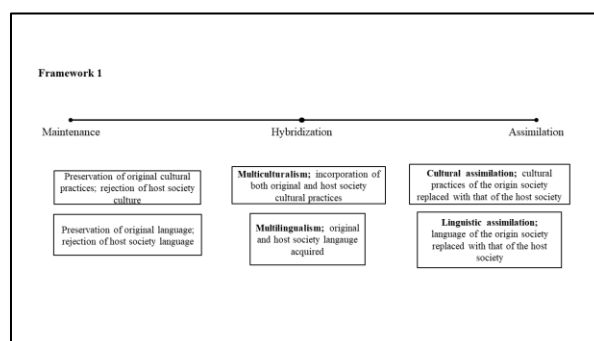


Figure 1. Descriptions of spectrum categories for framework analysis.

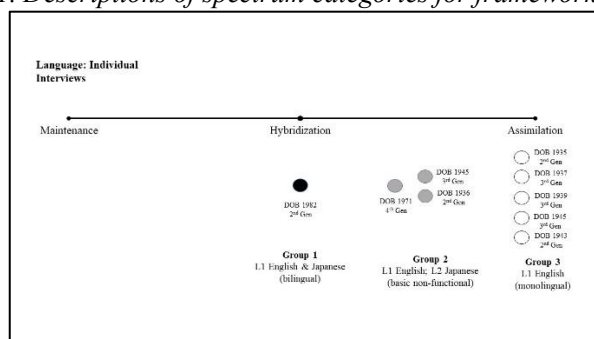


Figure 2. Analysis of linguistic capability of interview respondents along the spectrum.

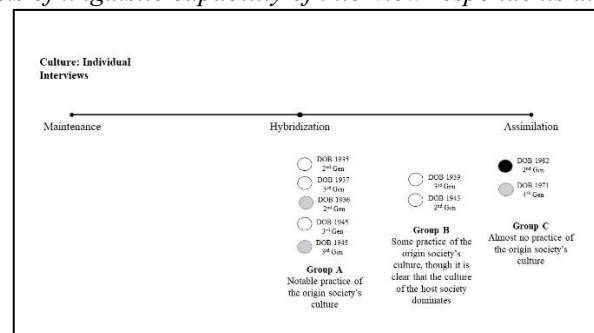


Figure 3. Analysis of the status of cultural practices of interview respondents along the spectrum.

Figures 2 and 3 display data gathered from participant interviews along the framework spectrum.

⁵ Details provided in appendix.

Generation and birth year are also listed. Participants are organized based on three groups for clarity when comparing figures 2 and 3.

We start with linguistic change in Figure 2. Among the nine participants, six can be placed towards the ‘assimilation’ end of the framework spectrum (group 3). They no longer speak the original language of their origin society (Okinawan), now monolingual speakers of their host society language (English). Three participants possessed basic Japanese skills through secondary acquisition⁶ (group 2), though not at a level of practical use with other speakers of Japanese. Only one participant was bilingual, though with English and Japanese, not Okinawan.

When considering Figure 3, it can be seen that language shift does not necessarily correspond with the participants’ level of cultural shift. The only participant of group 1 is bilingual yet showed the least amount of familiarity with the Okinawan culture.

It should also be noted that Japanese ability is not the same as Okinawan language ability. As stated before, the languages are distinct and separate. The fact that Okinawan decedents in Hawaii are choosing to learn Japanese over Okinawan, should they make such a decision, has implications of the cultural and historical relationship between Japan and Okinawa. Responses to the following interview question also highlight this trend. Responses to these questions show a contradiction between self-motivation of the participants to learn the Okinawan language and what they imagine to be good for future generations.

If given the chance, would you like to learn the Okinawan language?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, no interest • No, because it’s difficult • No, no time • Not Okinawa, but would want to learn Japanese (Okinawan is a dying language, no opportunities to use it) • Yes, I want to learn my heritage
Do you think it’s important for children to learn their heritage languages? ⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, so they can talk to their relatives • Yes, it’s a part of their heritage

Table 2. Reoccurring themes of responses to interview questions.

4. Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, there are four main sequential points to address in the following discussion. First, considering the lack of correspondence between linguistic and cultural shift, I suggest another modification to the spectrum framework. As shown in Figure 4, in addition to the previous three categories described earlier, we can add a third dimension of cultural and linguistic *transformation*. This dimension is not included along the two dimension spectrum between complete maintenance or assimilation but rather represents a different direction. The change of linguistic and cultural characteristics as a result of migrant-host society interaction become solidified. New characteristics unique to that region are formed. From this, it is possible to Hawaii as a whole as having gone through these transformations, and many long term residents not on the spectrum between linguistic/cultural maintenance or assimilation but rather possessing a transformed version: linguistically; Hawaiian Creole,⁸ and culturally; a broader cultural identity of belonging to Hawaii (though not ethnically native Hawaiian).

⁶ Language acquisition through purposeful study as opposed to primary acquisition where language is acquired naturally during childhood.

⁷ Language of the origin society of the migrant.

⁸ Colloquially called ‘pidgin,’ Hawaiian Creole formed out of the Pidgin English originally used by plantation workers from various ethnic backgrounds in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was the result of the need for a common way of communication and carries features from several migrant languages such as Japanese and Portuguese as well as native Hawaiian (Hargrove et al., n.d).

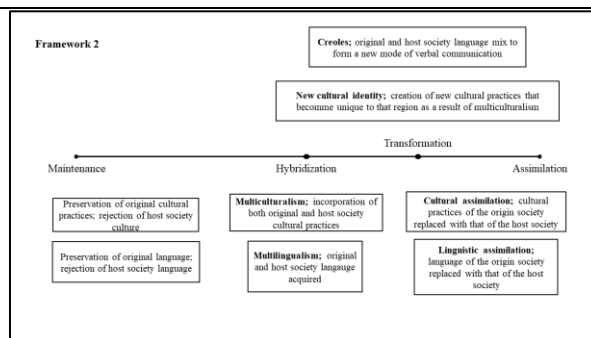


Figure 4. Revised framework incorporating another dimension.

Second, an additional consideration might be to look at broader institutions of *structural violence* between migrant and host society interactions that may cause linguistic and cultural assimilation. Depending on the conditions of other areas of life (political persecution, social/cultural pressures, economic hardship), it may not be possible or beneficial for the original language to be maintained. Especially in the case of the migrant who depends on economic capabilities and social cohesion for their survival, assimilating to the language and culture of the host society may provide a greater chance of a quality life. It may not be until these situations are relaxed that acquiring the language can be pursued.

Third, we must move away from common discourse that language is the heart of culture. Communities who have gone through language shift and no longer speak the language of the origin society are not void of cultural substance. Rather, in some cases it is possible that the product is a hybridization or transformation of their linguistic or cultural identity.

Lastly, the purpose of this project is not to discourage language revitalization. The researcher fully acknowledges the importance to such efforts and understands the worth of promoting the preservation of language and culture. It is the hope that through further research, light can be shed on the complexity of linguistic and cultural assimilation. Experiences of migrants and minority groups and the changes they go through are not a simple one-way cause-and-effect processes, but rather complex and multidimensional.

5. Conclusion

The Okinawan language is not the main form of communication among the Okinawan community in Hawaii. While there are small efforts at language revitalization, they are small scale and many often choose to study Japanese instead of Okinawan in the case that they choose to acquire a second language. However, this language shift does not equate to a loss of culture. Okinawan culture is still very much alive in Hawaii despite having gone through transformation in Hawaii's the multicultural environment over time.

6. Appendix

#	Year of Birth	Gender	Generation (1-5)	Language Ability (English, Japanese, Okinawan)
1	1935	F	2	English (fluent)
2	1937	F	3	English (fluent)
3	1936	F	2	English (fluent) Japanese (basic, taking classes at senior center)
4	1939	M	3	English (fluent)
5	1945	F	3	English (fluent)
6	1945	F	3	English (fluent) Japanese (basic, took classes at senior center)
7	1971	F	4	English (fluent)

				Japanese (novice, took classes from elementary to high school)	
8	1982	F	2	English (fluent) Japanese (fluent)	
9	1943	F	2	English (fluent)	

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